

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0113

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, KS

SUBJECT: VISIT OF GAIMUSHO NE ASIA DIVISION DIRECTOR

REF: TOKYO 17834 DTG 160800Z DEC 75 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: DCM DISCUSSED VARIETY OF JAPAN/KOREA RELATED SUBJECTS WITH THE IRREPRESSIBLE MR. ENDO OVER LUNCH JANUARY 6, INCLUDING UN STRATEGY AND NORTH KOREA. ENDO PROBED U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD UNILATERAL DISSOLUTION OF UN COMMAND AND ARMISTICE AGREEMENT AND SAID THAT WORKING LEVEL OF GAIMUSHO HAD DISCUSSED, INTER ALIA, JAPAN-NORTH KOREA RELATIONS WITH PM MIKI, CONCLUDING, TO MIKI'S APPARENT CHAGRIN, THAT SITUATION DID NOT OFFER OPPORTUNITY FOR JAPANESE INITIATIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. TWO HOUR INFORMAL DISCUSSION JANUARY 6 BETWEEN GAIMUSHO EAST ASIA DIVISION DIRECTOR MASAKI ENDO AND EMBOFFS (DCM, CLEVELAND AND KELLEY) RANGED OVER VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, PRIMARILY UN STRATEGY AND NORTH KOREA.

2. UN STRATEGY - ENDO SAID HE SAW TWO ALTERNATIVES FOR THIS YEAR'S UNGA KOREA DEBATE: (A) GO THROUGH SAME PROCESS THIS YEAR AS LAST YEAR OR, (B) SIEZE INITIATIVE BY UNILATERALLY
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DISSOLVING UNC. ENDO SAID 1976 MAY BE LAST YEAR IN WHICH

FRIENDLY RESOLUTION ON KOREA CAN BE PASSED IN UNGA. MAIN THING TO FOCUS ON, THEREFORE, IS HOW TO USE TIME WE STILL HAVE TO MOVE KOREAN ISSUE OFF DEAD-CENTER IN UN. HE SUGGESTED UNILATERAL DISSOLUTION OF UNC WITH ACCEPTANCE OF RISK ENTAILED IN LOSS OF LEGAL BASIS FOR MAINTENANCE OF ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, ARGUING THAT NORTH KOREA ACTUALLY RESTRAINED BY BALANCE OF MILITARY FORCE AND AGREEMENT APPARENTLY DISPENSABLE.

3. DCM REPLIED THAT OPTION (B) ABOVE WOULD NOT PRECLUDE UN DEBATE, SINCE REAL TARGET OF NI - US TROOP PRESENCE - WOULD REMAIN, AND SAID ARMISTICE AGREEMENT PRESERVED LEGAL STATUS OF SUCH VULNERABLE AREAS AS NORTHWEST ISLANDS AND REPRESENTED BALANCE STRUCK BASED ON MILITARY SITUATION IN 1953. WITHOUT AGREEMENT, NORTH KOREA MIGHT CONCLUDE MILITARY BALANCE HAD ALTERED. IN ADDITION DCM POINTED OUT PRESENCE OF UNC PROVIDES BASIS FOR US COMMAND ROLE AND NECESSITY OF SETTLING COMMAND ARRANGEMENTS WITH ROKG BEFORE UNC COULD BE DISBANDED.

4. ENDO, AND JAPANESE EMBASSY COUNSELOR OKAZAKI, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT, SAID ROKG ATTITUDE AFTER UNGA KOREA VOTE, DENOUNCING UN EFFORT AS WASTEFUL AND CALLING FOR DOWNGRADING UN EFFORT, DISCOURAGED ITS FRIENDS WHO HAD WORKED SO HARD FOR SUCCESS. ENDO SAID, HOWEVER, ROK SHOULD HAVE PRIMARY SAY ON WHETHER KOREAN ISSUE SHOULD BE PURSUED IN UNGA THIS YEAR. DCM POINTED OUT IN CONFIDENCE THAT KOREAN PERCEPTION OF JAPANESE WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD AGAIN THIS YEAR WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ROK DECISION AND THAT THERE WAS REAL CONCERN IN ROKG ABOUT FUTURE JAPANESE ATTITUDES IN THIS REGARD.

5. NORTH KOREA - ENDO SAID JAPANESE PM MIKI HAD CALLED IN MID-LEVEL GAIMUSHO OFFICIALS AT END OF DECEMBER TO DISCUSS CHINA, ASEAN, AND KOREA WITHOUT SENIOR FONOFF OFFICIALS PRESENT. ENDO SAID HE TOLD MIKI JAPAN HAD ALREADY GONE AS FAR AS IT COULD GO IN ECONOMIC SPHERE. JAPAN HAD ALREADY PROVIDED EXIM BANK SUPPORT FOR SOME PROJECTS AND NORTH KOREA'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DIFFICULTIES WOULD PRECLUDE ANY SIGNIFICANT TRADE INCREASE. ADDITIONALLY, SINCE JAPAN HAD REMOVED ALL RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE, NO FURTHER LIBERALIZATION POSSIBLE. HIS CONCLUSION, WHICH HE DIDN'T THINK PM ACCEPTED VERY ENTHUSIASTICALLY, WAS THAT JAPAN CONFIDENTIAL

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HAD TAKEN ALL APPROPRIATE INITIATIVES AND BEST APPROACH FOR PRESENT WAS TO WAIT FOR NORTH KOREAN RESPONSE.

6. ENDO OUTLINED A RANGE OF POLICY OPTIONS HE THOUGHT WERE OPEN TO THE NORTH KOREANS, INCLUDING REDUCED ECONOMIC GROWTH, INCREASED TENTION ALONG DMZ, MORE ACCOMODATING ATTITUDE TOWARD ROK AND CONTINUATION OF PRESENT AGGRESSIVE DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE. HE CONCLUDED THAT OTHER OPTIONS CONTAINED

UNACCEPTABLE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COSTS FOR DPRK AND THAT DPRK WOULD CONCLUDE PRESENT DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE HAD PAID OFF SUFFICIENTLY TO WARRANT CONTINUATION FOR NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS. ENDO ALSO SAID GAIMUSHO BELIEVES KIM CHONG-IL IS DESIGNATED SUCCESSOR TO KIM IL-SONG, BUT THAT OLD GUARD MAY NOT BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT HIM. ACCESSION TO LEADERSHIP BY KIM CHONG-IL MAY PRECIPITATE POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN OLD GUARD AND IDEOLOGICALLY HARD-LINE TECHNOCRATS WHICH COULD WORSEN PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED PEACE IN KOREAN PENINSULA, ACCORDING TO ENDO.
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